

REMARKS

Dealing with preliminary matters first, Applicants thank the Examiner for acknowledging Applicants' claim to priority and receipt of the priority document. Further, it is noted with appreciation that the Examiner has considered the references cited in the Information Disclosure Statement concurrently filed with the application.

By way of this Amendment, Applicants have amended claims 1 and 4 to include the limitations of claims 2 and 5, respectively. For the following reasons, it is submitted that the application is in condition for allowance.

Drawings:

The drawings are objected to under 37 C.F.R. § 1.83(a) as not showing every feature of the invention specified in the claims. In particular, the Examiner asserts that the drawings do not show "a metallic ring which fits on either an outer circumferential side or an inner circumferential side of the shear ring," as recited in claims 2 and 5. Claims 1 and 4 have been amended with the Examiner's concern in mind regarding the metallic ring being one of the components of the shear ring.

More specifically, claims 1 and 4 recite:

the shearing ring comprising a metallic ring and a resin ring made of synthetic resin,
wherein the metallic ring fits on one of an outer circumferential side and an inner circumferential side of the resin ring,

The metallic ring is identified by reference numeral 22 in Fig. 4 and the resin ring is identified by reference numeral 21 in Figs. 4 and 5. As shown therein, and discussed in detail in the specification at page 13, lines 2+, "the shear ring 20 is made of a resin ring 21 formed from a

synthetic resin, a metallic ring 22 which is fitted on an outside of the resin ring 21 and a damping member 23....” This is clearly shown in Fig. 4 where the metallic ring is fitted on the outside of the resin ring 21. *See also* the discussion on page 16, lines 16-19 regarding the opposite arrangement.

Also, since the shear ring is made up of the metallic ring and the resin ring as supported by Fig. 4, the drawings and the specification provide full support for the requirement that the shear ring be divided (i.e., between the metallic ring and the resin ring) in the circumferential direction, as recited in claims 3 and 6 - one is outside of the other. Accordingly, it is respectfully requested that this objection be withdrawn.

Claim Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 112:

Related to the objection to the drawings, claims 2 and 5 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112 (first paragraph) as failing to comply with the enablement requirement. As noted above, it is submitted that the specification clearly describes the manner in which the metallic ring is disposed on the outside of the resin ring. Taking into consideration the above amendment to claims 1 and 4, it is submitted that the claims are fully enabled by the specification.

In addition, claims 2-6 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112 (second paragraph) as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the invention.

With respect to the Examiner’s concern regarding the shear ring, it is submitted that the above amendment to claims 1 and 4 overcome this rejection. As to claims 3 and 6, the shear ring 20 is divided in a circumferential direction in the sense that the metallic ring is disposed either on the inside or the outside of the resin ring and the shear ring is made up of the metallic ring and the resin ring.

With respect to the left and right flat plate portions, it is submitted that the above amendment to claim 4 overcomes this rejection.

Claim Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 102:

Claim 1 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Fujiu, et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,099,036). Applicants submit that claim 1 has been amended by incorporating the content of allowable claim 2. Thus, this rejection is moot.

In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,

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